



LIPSCOMB REPORT

1ST DISTRICT

FALL-WINTER 2019

THEODORE LIPSCOMB, SR.

Milwaukee County
Board Chairman

County Supervisor,
1st District

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APPOINTMENTS

Southeastern Wisconsin Regional
Planning Commission

Wisconsin Counties Association
Board of Directors



Chairman Lipscomb was joined by his eldest daughter Taylor on "Bring Your Child to Work Day." They are pictured sitting at the Chairperson's bench in the Milwaukee County Board Room.

Dear Neighbor,

We embarked on an ambitious endeavor to safeguard the future of Milwaukee County nearly one year ago.

I launched the Fair Deal initiative with County Executive Chris Abele in an effort to find solutions to our most serious fiscal challenges. The Fair Deal proposal looks to create a renewed partnership with the State of Wisconsin to protect local services and invest in our success.

In March, I began co-hosting a dozen town hall meetings around our county with my fellow Supervisors to talk about the Fair Deal. We connected with hundreds of residents about what matters to them in our community such as our parks, buses, senior centers, and major cultural assets like the Mitchell Park Domes and the Zoo. It is clear to me that we all want to see our county thrive.

When Executive Abele released his 2020 Recommended Budget, we knew we were facing many of the same challenges as in previous years. A growing structural deficit, long-deferred maintenance of infrastructure, and underfunded state mandates of county services all led to discussions on what to cut rather than where to invest.

So much has been accomplished over the years in the face of these immense barriers. I am proud of the work I have done to protect some of our most important services from cuts or privatization. We pursued opportunities to innovate in areas such as workforce development and green infrastructure. Instead of implementing a \$60 wheel tax or a proposed measure for paid parking in our parks, we found responsible ways to save on administrative costs without affecting vital services.

Yet time is running out on our ability to budget for services and amenities in a way that meets the needs of County residents. Milwaukee County's projected budget demands and constraints are simply not sustainable on a long-term basis.

These big problems led us to take bold and collective action. Please take a moment to read more about the Fair Deal, and the exciting new proposal at the state called "Move Milwaukee Forward" in this 2019 edition of my newsletter.

It is an honor to serve as your 1st District County Supervisor. I hope you and your family enjoy the upcoming holiday season.

Sincerely,

Theodore Lipscomb, Sr., Chairman
Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors, 1st District

A Fair Deal for Milwaukee County



Chairman Lipscomb speaks before the Greater Milwaukee Committee on the Fair Deal proposal.

Chairman Lipscomb brought together local government officials with community, labor, and business leaders to put forward a series of recommendations called the Fair Deal for Milwaukee County.

The Fair Deal unites people from all sectors and across the political spectrum to face the coming financial crisis together. The reality of our crumbling infrastructure and the burden of the structural deficit (budget gap) cannot be ignored. Even with no new areas of spending, the cost to maintain current service levels each year grows on average by 2.4 percent while revenue only grows by about 1 percent. This imbalance creates budget gaps that have averaged \$30 million a year and resulted in a cumulative \$278 million in budget cuts since 2012.

"In an ideal world, the onset of annual budget deliberations for governments and businesses should be highlighted by discussion about where to invest new resources to address growing needs or to enhance successful programs or strategies or where to lower the cost of government for the public. For Milwaukee County officials, however, the opposite is the case. Given the county's longstanding structural imbalance, the budget process begins with a calculation of the size of the annual budget gap and discussion of the spending cuts and revenue increases that will be required to bridge it." –Wisconsin Policy Forum; Budget Brief: Milwaukee County 2020 Executive Budget

Milwaukee County is also challenged with a backlog of major capital projects totaling hundreds of millions of dollars. For far too long, we have been forced to delay necessary maintenance in our parks and have put off important investments in public infrastructure and popular cultural venues.

It's time to invest in a bright future for Milwaukee County. It's time for a Fair Deal.

The Fair Deal for Milwaukee County Workgroup, co-chaired by Chairman Lipscomb and County Executive Abele, put forward a set of recommendations on strengthening the partnership between Milwaukee County and the State of Wisconsin. The recommendations include:

- Allowing Milwaukee County local control to generate new revenue and reduce the current reliance on property taxes through a binding referendum process.
- Increased, fair contributions from the state toward the provision of current and any new state-mandated services.
- Fully reimbursing the County for the cost of patrolling freeways (Milwaukee County is the only Wisconsin county required by state law to patrol freeways).
- Equally sharing Circuit Court and Register of Deeds fees collected by the County (currently 80% goes to the state and 20% remains with the County).
- Adjusting state Shared Revenue payments and other state aids to align with any inflationary increases in the cost of adequately providing public programs and services (Milwaukee County tax revenue sent to the State has grown by more than \$400 million between 2009 and 2015, but what the state releases back to Milwaukee County has remained flat, or in some cases decreased).
- Accepting federal funds to expand medical coverage for 80,000 Wisconsin residents.
- Adequately funding any youth justice facilities located in the County.
- Rejecting any reduction in existing funding below amounts received in the 2019 Adopted Budget.



Fair Deal Town Hall Meetings Around the County



1. North Shore Library hosted by Chairman Lipscomb
2. Clinton Rose Senior Center hosted by Chairman Lipscomb and Supervisors Willie Johnson, Jr. and Supreme Moore Omokunde
3. Wauwatosa Public Library hosted by Chairman Lipscomb and Supervisors James "Luigi" Schmitt and Eddie Cullen
4. Sherman Phoenix hosted by Chairman Lipscomb and Supervisors Felesia Martin (speaking) and Marcelia Nicholson (left)
5. Franklin Public Library hosted by Chairman Lipscomb and Supervisors Anthony Staskunas and Patti Logsdon

Progress at the State: Move Milwaukee Forward

Portions of the Fair Deal have gained momentum. The State of Wisconsin budget included a modest increase in aid for local transportation funding.

Perhaps most exciting is the “Move Milwaukee Forward” bills introduced in the legislature by Representative Evan Goyke and Senator LaTonya Johnson. This measure would allow Milwaukee County to hold a binding referendum on a local option sales tax of one percent, empowering residents to decide how they want to raise revenue.

A one percent sales tax increase is projected to raise about \$160 million annually. Of that amount, 25 percent or at least \$40 million, would be dedicated to property tax relief. Public health projects, including lead pipe and paint abatement, would use seven percent of the funds. The remaining portion would be split between Milwaukee County and the 19 municipalities within the County, based on population.

The sales tax referendum offers voters the option to decide if we should capture revenue from tourists and individuals living outside Milwaukee County who work here or come to enjoy our many cultural attractions. The current system of local government finance relies heavily on property owners.

According to the Wisconsin Policy Forum, a nonpartisan, independent statewide policy research organization, “No other Midwestern state relies so heavily on the property tax and so little on other taxes to pay for municipal services.”

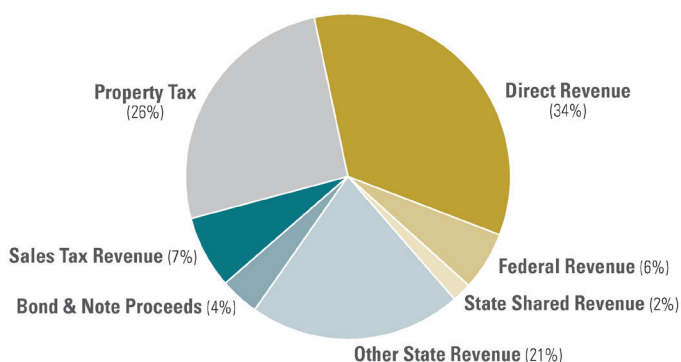
The idea of a new source of revenue responds to the call of citizens across our county who want to see critical investments in transportation, parks and necessary public services in their communities and it gives them the power to make it a reality. Increasing the sales tax by one percent offers a revenue solution that is at scale with the problem.



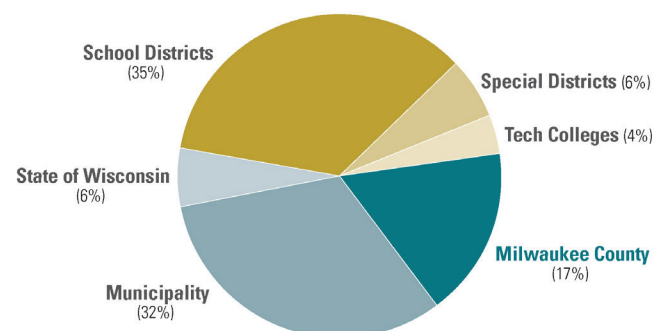
Chairman Lipscomb speaks at a press conference announcing Move Forward MKE, a coalition of leaders working to build a new partnership with the state.

These bills are pending at this time. A coalition of local governments, business leaders, and community leaders called Move Forward MKE was established in support of allowing Milwaukee County the ability to give voters the option in a binding referendum. To learn more, visit moveforwardmke.com.

Composition of 2020 Budgeted Countywide Revenues










Distribution of Property Taxes in Milwaukee County



Source: Milwaukee County DAS - Performance Strategy and Budget Office

2020 Budget Highlights

Budget & Policy Issues	County Executive (CEX) Recommended Budget	Chairman Lipscomb Amendments
 Milwaukee County Transit System	CEX Recommends the elimination of several transit routes including two freeway flyers and bus service for the Brewers Line, State Fair Freeway Flyers/Shuttle, and the Wisconsin Ave. Summerfest Shuttle.	<i>Chairman Lipscomb authored an amendment that would maintain service for 75% of bus riders impacted by the CEX's proposed route cuts.</i>
 Health and Human Services	Creates the "No Wrong Door" initiative aimed at providing a single point of access to residents for all services and programs within the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS).	<i>Chairman Lipscomb authored an amendment that would allocate \$100,000 for DHHS – Housing Division to develop a plan that assists homeless victims of domestic violence with emergency shelter options.</i>
 Brown Deer Park Roadway	\$4.3 million is allocated to complete the Brown Deer Park roadway project, which includes repaving all roads and parking lots at Brown Deer Park.	<i>Chairman Lipscomb fought to secure initial design and construction funding for the past two years, ensuring this project continued to move forward.</i>
 Milwaukee County Parks	The overall Parks recommended budget reduces operation expenses by \$750,000 and expands capital spending for parks maintenance projects. Operation reductions include the closure of Holler Park pool and Grobschmidt pool.	<i>Chairman Lipscomb authored an amendment that would re-open Grobschmidt Pool.</i>
 Public Safety	CEX recommends expanding Electronic Monitoring and Home Detention by up to 360 inmates, which is projected to save \$1.7 million by closing five inmate dorms at the House of Correction.	<i>Chairman Lipscomb is working to address concerns about this proposal from judges and the community to ensure that good public safety practices, not just finances, drive policy.</i>
 The Mitchell Park Domes	CEX Budget did not include any funds to repair the Mitchell Park Horticultural Conservatory (The Domes).	<i>Chairman Lipscomb authored an amendment that allocates about \$108,000 to further develop a long-term plan to repair and preserve the Domes and revitalize Mitchell Park.</i>
 Property Tax Levy	CEX recommended a tax levy increase of 2.51 percent (the state-imposed legal limit), while decreasing gross expenditures by about \$6.9 million from the 2019 Adopted Budget.	<i>Chairman Lipscomb authored amendments that would reduce the CEX recommended tax levy increase by \$661,896 to 2.28 percent.</i>

At the time this newsletter was written, the 2020 Budget had not yet been adopted. Chairman Lipscomb has introduced amendments that would restore transit services, invest more in parks and cultural facilities, and reduce the property tax levy increase to a level below that recommended by County Executive Abele. For more information on final budget adoption of the 2020 Budget visit: milwaukee.gov/lipscomb.

Theodore LIPSCOMB



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1ST DISTRICT E-NEWSLETTER SIGN-UP

To receive updates on Milwaukee County news and events in our community, sign up for my e-newsletter:
www.milwaukee.gov/Lipscomb



For legislative files, agendas, minutes and schedules for all Milwaukee County committee and board meetings, please visit the County Legislative Information Center at:
county.milwaukee.gov/CLIC



Chairman Lipscomb and members of the County Board meet with the participants of the Senior Statesman Program. The program was designed by the Milwaukee County Department on Aging and gives older adults a chance to learn more about local government, and how to effectively advocate for the issues that matter to them.



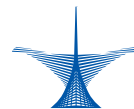
Chairman Lipscomb invites you to enjoy FREE Milwaukee County attractions!



Thank You Thursday
Free general admission to MPM on the first Thursday of every month.
Visit mpm.edu for more info.



Family FREE Days & Special Holidays
2019: 12/7, Thanksgiving, Christmas & New Year's Day.
Visit milwaukeezoo.org for more info.



MILWAUKEE ART MUSEUM
FREE for all visitors the first Thursday of every month
Visit mam.org for more info.



FREE on the first Thursday of every month for County residents
Excludes major holidays.
Visit milwaueedomes.org for more info.



FREE for all visitors the first Wednesday of every month
Visit villaterrace.org for more info.



FREE for all visitors the first Wednesday of every month
Visit charlesallis.org for more info.